

Louis was reduced to the necessity of ordering the strict observance of the blockade. The facility with which the travellers of French commercial houses passed from Holland to England gave rise to other alarms on the part of the French Government. It was said that since Frenchmen could so easily pass from the Continent to Great Britain, the agents of the English Cabinet might, by the same means, find their way to the Continent. Accordingly the consuls were directed to keep a watchful eye, not only upon individuals who evidently came from England, but upon those who might by any possibility come from that country. This plan was all very well, but how was it to be put into execution ? . . . The Continent was, nevertheless, inundated with articles of English manufacture, for this simple reason, that, however powerful may be the will of a sovereign, it is still less powerful and less lasting than the wants of a people. The Continental system reminded me of the law created by an ancient legislator, who, for a crime which he conceived could not possibly be committed, condemned the person who should be guilty of it to throw a bull over Mount Taurus.

It is not my present design to trace a picture of the state of Europe at the close of 1806. I will merely throw together a few facts which came to my knowledge at the time, and which I find in my correspondence. I have already mentioned that the Emperor arrived at Warsaw on the 1st of January. During his stay at Posen he had, by virtue of a treaty concluded with the Elector of Saxony, founded a new kingdom, and consequently extended his power in Germany, by the annexation of the new Kingdom of Saxony to the Confederation of the Rhine. By the terms of this treaty Saxony, so justly famed for her cavalry, was to furnish the Emperor with a contingent of 20,000 men and horses.¹

It was quite a new spectacle to the Princes of Germany, all accustomed to old habits of etiquette, to see an upstart

¹ The Duchy of Warsaw was formed under the Treaty of Tilsit, July, 1807, chiefly from the former Polish provinces of Prussia, which she had obtained after 1st January, 1772, about 400,000 souls. On the 17th of September, 1807, it was handed over to the King of Saxony as Grand Duke. It formed part of the Confederation of the Rhine, and the contingent of Saxony, formerly